

**MINUTES    LEESBURG PLANNING COMMISSION    DECEMBER 16, 2004**  
**DRAFT**

The Leesburg Planning Commission met on Thursday, December 16, 2004 in the Council Chambers, 25 West Market Street, Leesburg, Virginia. Staff members present were Chris Murphy, Brian Boucher, Susan Swift, Mike Baumgartner, Lyle Fisher and Linda DeFranco.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman Vaughan.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL**

Present: Chairman Vaughan  
Commissioner Bangert  
Commissioner Barnes  
Commissioner Jones  
Commissioner Wright.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Bangert moved to adopt the agenda as presented.

Motion:        Bangert  
Second:       Barnes  
Carried:       4-0-3

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Bangert moved to adopt the minutes of the December 2, 2004 meeting as presented.

Motion:        Bangert  
Second:        Jones  
Carried:        4-0-3

Commissioners Wright and Hoovler were not present for these votes. Commissioner Kalriess was absent.

**PREVIEW CASES**

None

**CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT**

Chairman Vaughan briefly recapped the protocol of Petitioners' Session during the meeting.

**MINUTES    LEESBURG PLANNING COMMISSION    DECEMBER 16, 2004**  
**DRAFT**

**PETITIONERS**

James Wynn of 1414 Hague Drive, SW came forward and addressed the Commission on the concept of the Leesburg Integrated Bio Technology Support Center. He felt that the time is right to work with universities and research laboratories, along with pharmaceutical companies to establish a Bio Tech center in the Leesburg area. The time is right to establish a Bio Tech area in the Land Use section of the Town Plan. Leesburg's proximity to NIH and to the FDA, along with Dulles Airport are all factors working in its favor toward such an effort.

Commissioner Bangert asked what the role of the Planning Commission would be in this effort. Mr. Wynn responded that it would be through land use designation.

Commissioner Jones asked about the role of Hughes, will they be a big player? How can we energize them to spearhead this effort? Or, do we do the spearheading? Mr. Wynn replied that the Town would have to work closely with Hughes to make this happen. The town would give the support while Hughes would provide the proper data and technical aspects of the project.

Chairman Vaughan thanked Mr. Wynn and told him this was definitely something to pursue. He asked Mr. Wynn to work with the Economic Development Commission and the Airport Commission to move this idea forward, and thanked him for his presentation this evening.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

None

**SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT**

None

**ZONING**

**SE2004-0006 – Catoctin Circle Center – Bank with Drive Thru, Special Exception – Southeast Corner of Catoctin Circle, NE and Edwards Ferry Road, NE behind the Leesburg Plaza Shopping Center.**

Chris Murphy, Senior Planner gave the staff presentation. He commented that the applicant had complied with the required buffer zone size, which will help preserve large elms on the property. It was suggested that the grading be modified to a hip wall rather than a sloping grade. With these conditions, Mr. Murphy recommended approval of this special exception

Chairman Vaughan asked if there were any questions.

**MINUTES   LEESBURG PLANNING COMMISSION   DECEMBER 16, 2004**  
**DRAFT**

Commissioner Bangert wanted to be assured that these two special exceptions were being voted on separately. Chairman Vaughan responded that yes, they were.

Commissioner Bangert moved that SE2004-06, Catoctin Circle Center, Bank with Drive Through be approved contingent upon the acceptance of the conditions as outlined.

Motion:        Bangert  
Second:        Wright  
Carried:        5-0

Commissioner Hoovler was not present for this vote

**SE2004-0007 – Catoctin Circle Center – Private Parking Structure, Special Exception - Southeast Corner of Catoctin Circle, NE and Edwards Ferry Road, NE behind the Leesburg Plaza Shopping Center**

Chris Murphy gave the staff presentation on this application. The main concern as submitted is the height of the light poles on the upper deck of the proposed garage. It is uncertain whether the proposed 16' height would conform with the DCSM standards with regard to visually seeing the light fixture from the ground level.

Commissioner Jones was concerned that the picture used depicted vegetation that was nonexistent. Mr. Murphy responded that the picture showed the 15-year growth of the proposed vegetation. Mr. Jones felt this was misleading and should have been explained in the presentation. He asked that all vegetation be shown in its proper context in future pictures/renderings. Next Mr. Jones wanted a detailed explanation of the ingress and egress patterns from Plaza Street. The availability of the pedestrian accessways between the residential areas, the Giant plaza, the new center and Leesburg Plaza were also discussed. He asked the applicant to discuss how they plan to do this at this evening's meeting.

Commissioner Bangert felt that another traffic impact study should be done after the center has opened and the traffic is flowing at its maximum.

Commissioner Wright asked about the lighting and its compliance with the DCSM. Chris Murphy assured him that the contingency addressed this problem.

Commissioner Barnes said if the lights were placed on the wall, then the height problem of the lightpoles would go away.

Chairman Vaughan said his question concerned the height of the top deck wall and he asked the applicant to address this, along with the other concerns brought up tonight. They include the Plaza Street ingress/aggress; pedestrian ways and access to surrounding neighborhoods; traffic flow in the area; lighting and wall heights.

**MINUTES   LEESBURG PLANNING COMMISSION   DECEMBER 16, 2004**  
**DRAFT**

Mike Banzhaff, representing the applicant; said that the final development plan shows the interparcel connection as far as pedestrian ways and traffic flow. All of this is by right, the only thing under consideration this evening is the drivethrough at the bank, and the private parking structure.

Commissioner Jones said he understood that, but asked how they planned to implement the patterns, landscaping and signage into the center. Mr. Banzhaff responded that there is an easement they need to get from the town to put in the entrance on Plaza Street. He was uncertain how the signage could be displayed in this area. Mr. Jones also asked about the access to the current Giant plaza, along with the pedestrian ways that would interconnect these business areas with the neighborhoods.

John Cantrill, representing the applicant, came forward to demonstrate on the drawing how the sidewalks would connect throughout the site. Commissioner Jones asked if the sidewalks on Catoctin Circle would also be connected to the pedestrian ways within the site. Mr. Cantrill said that they would connect, but that their aesthetics are still being designed.

Mr. Banzhaff said that six months after the center opens, there will be another evaluation of the traffic patterns around the site. Although making major changes at that time will be difficult, he feels that the traffic studies that have been completed pretty much summed up the impact in the area and was approved by the town's engineering department.

Commissioner Bangert said she is still concerned that by the time the center is open, that there will be so much traffic that the neighbors will not be able to access Edwards Ferry Road. The neighbors just want some reassurances that the traffic flow will work in the area, even if that means some reconfiguration. Mr. Banzhaff said it is difficult at this time to take into account now what might occur in the future, especially since it will take several years before this project is complete.

Chairman Vaughan said that if the system fails in the future, it would be up to the Council to consider alternatives to fix the problem.

Mike Baumgartner came forward to say that this can be considered since a study has already been done with respect to removing the barriers in the Lowenbach subdivision, and this would tie in with the traffic circulation in the area of Catoctin and Edwards Ferry Rd.

Brian Boucher said that conditions can be imposed on Special Exceptions, but they are restrictive in nature. In the special exception process you cannot ask for future traffic impact studies. The study has been done and has been accepted by the town, what occurs in the future would be up to the town to remedy. Mr. Banzhaff responded that this condition is not reasonable to this project. There may be a time when the barriers should be removed and that would be the citizens' opportunity to approach Council regarding this.

**MINUTES   LEESBURG PLANNING COMMISSION   DECEMBER 16, 2004**  
**DRAFT**

Chairman Vaughan brought up the issue of lighting, poles vs. wall lighting, and also the height of the wall on the upper level so that automobiles are not visible from the street level.

Mike Banzhaff first addressed light standards and said that could certainly work with the placement of the lighting. With concern for the wall, it is approximately 4 feet high, to increase the size could weaken the structure. Susan Swift said the initial drawings did not make the wall placement clear and they just wanted to make sure that there was some sort of wall. Chairman Vaughan said he would like to see a higher wall, or at least a wall that would block view of the cars on the top level. John Cantrill said that they could possible make the wall 48” high versus 36”. It is currently a car stop wall, but it can be raised somewhat. They do need to take into consideration the county requirements for parking garages.

Commissioner Jones went back to traffic and transportation. He said that he knows they have approval to go forward, but at the same time there is the Lowenbach issue, an issue of a traffic light that is on the books, a suspicion that the traffic study was done without consideration of opening the barriers in Lowenbach, all of which raise concerns. This is a major development in a transitional areas and everyone should consider the impact on the future of the area..

There was some discussion about adding the parapet height and lighting reconfiguration into the motion to approve. Mr. Cantrill said they need to consider that lighting in the walls could reduce the number of spaces that can fit into the garage. He wants the Commission to understand that they might not be able to put lights in the parapet all the way around.

Commissioner Wright said that it should not say “take out all pole lights” – the intent is to make the light source invisible from the ground and this can be done with elevated lights but a different design. Commissioner Vaughan said they are not trying to redesign the building, but just want to make sure that its impact is minimal on surrounding neighborhoods.

Commissioner Wright moved that we approve TLSE 2004-06 with the recommended conditions as outlined in the staff report with the following additions: under the condition for parking use, add the parapet wall will be 48” in height, and under the lighting condition add, that in no event shall the lighting include pole lights on the top deck.

Moved:     Wright  
Second:    Barnes  
Carried:    6-0

Commissioner Hoovler was present for this vote.

**MINUTES   LEESBURG PLANNING COMMISSION   DECEMBER 16, 2004**  
**DRAFT**

Brian Boucher read verbiage that he would like to present to the applicant for inclusion in the final approval:

Lighting on the top deck of the parking garage shall be recessed into the parapet wall except along the west elevation, adjacent to the proposed office building. Pole lights shall be prohibited on the top deck of the parking garage.

This verbiage was accepted as an amendment to the aforementioned motion.

Motion:     Wright  
Second:     Barnes  
Carried:     6-0

**COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING**

There will be a special worksession in the Second Floor Conference Room immediately following adjournment of the Planning Commission meeting to discuss the JLMA. Special guests are Cindi Martin, Airport Director and Steve Axeman, Chairman of the Airport Commission.

**COUNCIL AND REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT**

None

**STAFF AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Commissioner Hoovler attended the Economic Development Commission meeting and reported that they will be using Kathryn McCarty for a special meeting. They are also reviewing their business strategy and keeping it updated. Mr. Hoovler briefed them on the JLMA issue and told them they would share information once it becomes available. They had comments on the Streetscape Ordinance and the Parking Code revisions.

Commissioner Wright thanked staff for making arrangements for the VCPA Planning Commissioners Certification session.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Vaughan mentioned that the Commission officer elections will take place on January 6, 2005 and that he will not be a candidate for any officer position on the Commission.

**MINUTES   LEESBURG PLANNING COMMISSION   DECEMBER 16, 2004**  
**DRAFT**

Secondly he commented on the feedback from the retreat. They need to address this at the January 6 meeting. He asked staff to provide the Commission with the minutes and any relevant notes so that they can proceed with an action plan.

Commissioner Bangert thanked Mr. Wynn for his presentation and said she was very impressed with it. She is glad that he will take this to the EDC and she would like to see a joint meeting after he has done so that they can formulate some plans for the JLMA area. She asked that Mr. Wynn receive the dates of the Airport Commission meetings and the EDC meeting. There was some concern about the result of the joint meetings and the incorporation of the proposal into the Town Plan. Susan Swift assured them that once they receive the draft Town Plan, they will have the opportunity to include thoughts into the final Town Plan.

Commissioner Bangert further mentioned information was passed out regarding Bolen Park, she asked the Commission to review this and send in their comments.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 8:15pm. The Commission will reconvene in the Second Floor Conference Room to discuss JLMA issues.

**Prepared by:**

**Approved by:**

---

**Linda DeFranco, Commission Clerk**

---

**Clifton Vaughan, Chairman**